

Message Text

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UNCLAS VIENNA 7128

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, YU, AU

SUBJECT: SLOVENE MINORITY ISSUE

REF: VIENNA 7073

1. FOLLOWING ARE LATEST AUSTRIAN DEVELOPMENTS ON SLOVENE MINORITY ISSUE AND RELATED MATTERS.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER-DELEGATE WILLIBALD PAHR, WHO IS HEAD OF CHANCELLERY LEGAL SECTION AND KEY ADVISOR TO CHANCELLOR KREISKY ON AUSTRIA'S MINORITIES PROBLEM, TOLD "DIE PRESSE" AUGUST 25 THAT WHITE BOOK ON ETHNIC MINORITIES IN AUSTRIA WAS ALMOST COMPLETE BUT THAT HE WAS OPPOSED TO ITS PUBLICATION UNTIL AFTER AUSTRIA'S MINORITIES LAWS ARE FULLY IMPLEMENTED IN MAY 1977.

3. IN SEPARATE TV INTERVIEW PHAR SAID YUGOSLAV AGITATION HAD REACHED LIMITS OF POSSIBLE IF IT HAD NOT ACTUALLY SURPASSED THEM. HE NOTED YUGOSLAVS HAD SHIFTED FROM CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SLOVENES TO REPROACH FOR NEO-NAZISM WHICH, HE SAID, WOULD BE UNCLASSIFIED

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JUSTIFIED ONLY IF RIGHT OF SLOVENES TO EXIST IN

AUSTRIA WERE DENIED. AS TO PLANNED MINORITY CENSUS, PAHR SAID YUGOSLAVS WERE UNWILLING TO ALLOW CENSUS IN AUSTRIA WHILE INSISTING ON ONE IN BULGRIA. PAHR ALSO COMMENTED THAT EVEN THOUGH ASSIMILATION OF MINORITIES WILL NOT BE PROMOTED IN AUSTRIA, EVERY AUSTRIAN SLOVENE MUST HAVE RIGHT TO ASSIMILATE IF HE SO WISHES.

4. MEANWHILE, FOLLOWING FURTHER ATTACKS ON AUSTRIA IN YUGOSLAV MEDIA, KREISKY, AGAIN CONTACTED BY PRESS IN VENICE, REPORTEDLY REFUSED TO COMMENT BECAUSE ATTACKS WERE SO MONSTROUS. ACCORDING TO VIENNA PAPERS, KREISKY SAID IN FUTURE HE WOULD ONLY RESPOND WHEN ADDRESSED AT HIS OWN LEVEL, I.E. WHEN YUGOSLAV PRIME MINISTER MAKES STATEMENT.

5. IN CARINTHIA, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT'S EXPERT (SOCIALIST) ON MINORITY AFFAIRS TERMED YUGOSLAV ATTACKS TRAGIC BECAUSE THEY RADICALIZED SLOVENE MINORITY LEADERS AND CAUSED MAJORITY OF AUSTRIAN SLOVENES TO DISSOCIATE THEMSELVES FROM THEIR ETHNIC GROUP AND SEEK ASSIMILATION. IN BURGENLAND, SOCIALIST CROAT MAYORS, WHO CONSIDER THEMSELVES ASSIMILATED AND, IN FACT, ADVOCATE ASSIMILATION AS NECESSARY FOR MINORITIES TO ACHIEVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN GERMAN-SPEAKING AUSTRIA, ACCUSED MILITANT CROAT CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF TROUBLING RELATIONS BETWEEN CROAT AND GERMAN-SPEAKING AUSTRIANS AS WELL AS RELATIONS BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND YUGOSLAVIA. CONFERENCE OF CROAT MAYORS PREDICTED AUSTRIAN CROATS WOULD REACT TO YUGOSLAVIA'S ANTI-AUSTRIAN CAMPAIGN BY REGISTERING IN NOVEMBER LANGUAGE CENSUS AS GERMAN-SPEAKING. MEEHAN

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